



SUNDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 19, 1971, AT 7:30 P.M.

DOROTHY CHANDLER PAVILION

LOS ANGELES MASTER CHORALE AND SINFONIA BRASS ENSEMBLE

ROGER WAGNER, Music Director

ROGER WAGNER

Conductor

ANDREE JORDAN

Soprano

DOROTHY REMSEN

Harpist

THOMAS HARMON

Organist

THE HANDBELL CHOIR

of the
NEIGHBORHOOD CHURCH
OF PALOS VERDES

Charles Friesen, Director

AVE MARIA

Sergei Rachmaninoff
(1873-1943)

A HYMN TO THE VIRGIN (for two choirs)

Benjamin Britten
(b. 1913)

WASSAIL SONG

Arr. by Ralph VaughanWilliams
(1872-1958)

A CEREMONY OF CAROLS (for treble choir and harp)

Benjamin Britten

Procession

Wolcum Yole!

There is no rose

That youngè child

Balulalow

As dew in Aprille

This little Babe

Interlude

In freezing winter night

Spring Carol

Deo Gracias

Recession

ANDREE JORDAN and JEANNINE WAGNER, soloists

CHRISTMAS CANTATA (chorus, double brass choir,
and organ)

Daniel Pinkham
(b. 1923)

I Quem vidistis pastores?

II O magnum mysterium

III Gloria in excelsis Deo

INTERMISSION

SING WE NOW OF CHRISTMAS

Arr. by Salli Terri
(b. 1922)

THREE CAROLS ON GEORGIAN THEMES

Adoro Te devote
Do You Know the New-Born Child?

XIII Century Chant
Wilbur Chenoweth
(b. 1899)

Resonet in laudibus
The Virgin's Slumber Song

XIV Century Chant
Max Reger
(1873-1916)
arr. by Roger Wagner

Puer natus est nobis
A Babe Is Born Unto Us

XI Century Chant
Roger Wagner
(b. 1914)

THREE CHRISTMAS SPIRITUALS

Mary Had a Baby

Arr. by William L. Dawson
(b. 1905)

The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy

Arr. by Robert de Cormier
(b. 1922)

Jesus, Jesus, Rest Your Head

Arr. by Salli Terri

ANDREE JORDAN, soloist

UN MÉLANGE DE NOELS FAVORIS

Arr. by Roger Wagner

avec les Jouers de Cloches

Il Est Né

God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen

Deck the Halls

Good King Wenceslas

Anges de Nos Campagnes

RODGERS ORGAN

The musical presentations on this program are made possible, in part, through the sponsorship of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors and the Los Angeles County Music and Performing Arts Commission.

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THE LOS ANGELES MASTER CHORALE AND SINFONIA ORCHESTRA is now in its eighth season of presenting great choral masterworks in The Music Center. The organization, which was formed by Roger Wagner and the Los Angeles Junior Chamber of Commerce, became a resident company at the Center in 1964. Dr. Wagner has been music director for the chorale and orchestra since its formation.

Each year a series of important choral programs is presented in the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, marking Los Angeles as the only city in the country which supports its own professional resident chorus presenting an annual choral season. One hundred of the Southland's finest singers have been admitted to the select membership in the ensemble.

ROGER WAGNER, music director for the Los Angeles Master Chorale and Sinfonia Orchestra, was born in LePuy, France. The Wagner family moved to California when he was 7, and by the age of 12, he was organist and choral director for the Church of St. Ambrose in Los Angeles. From that time to the present, his long and illustrious career has embraced every phase of music. His reputation is monumental and worldwide. Many of the world's leading conductors and musicians have hailed his accomplishments. He has conducted choral groups in every state in the union as well as extensive overseas tours covering Europe, South America, Canada, Mexico, Central America, the Near East and the Orient. His career in choral music also includes numerous recordings. For nearly a quarter of a century he has been music director of choral activities at the University of California at Los Angeles. Dr. Wagner has appeared as guest conductor with the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra and has conducted countless times in the Hollywood Bowl. His notable achievements in the field of church music have won him recognition from Pope Paul VI, who bestowed the order of Knight Commander of St. Gregory on Dr. Wagner.



ANDREE JORDAN is rapidly becoming one of the most sought-after young singers in the area, combining talent with beauty. She has received critical acclaim across the country in recent appearances with the Meadowbrook Music Festival, the Omaha Symphony and the Phoenix Symphony. She was featured soloist in the most recent tour of the Roger Wagner Chorale under the aegis of Sol Hurok. The clarity and compelling warmth of the voice has made it possible for her to perform both soprano and mezzo-soprano repertoire. She is active on the operatic stage and particularly enjoys the dramatic challenge of roles such as Cherubino and Seibel, as well as that of Aldonza in *Man of La Mancha*.

Program Annotator,
Los Angeles Master Chorale

It has almost become traditional for Chorale concerts to open with the luminous, ascetic *Ave Maria* of Victoria. This evening, however, the Chorale presents another setting of this text: the warm, rich, impassioned texture of Russian liturgical music. Sergei Rachmaninoff wrote this as the sixth motet of the *Vespers*, Op. 35, in 1915. It opens quietly. At *Sancta Maria*, the sopranos and the tenors bracket the parallel thirds of the altos with a soaring melody in octaves. At *Ora pro nobis*, the entrance of the basses triggers a massive climax. The emotion is soon spent. The work ends quietly.

A Hymn to the Virgin (1930, rev. 1934) was written when Benjamin Britten was 17 years old. It has a simple and appealing tune that is heard three times, the third stanza being slightly more elaborate in texture. The modal tonality has no suggestion of the sham antique, but is well suited to the very attractive medieval words.

Wassail Song, the last of *Five English Folk Songs* "freely arranged" by Vaughan Williams in 1913, is in a fast triple time. From the first entrance of the tune the forward motion never ceases. This fine, secular carol evokes a very British Ghost of Christmas Past. One can almost see old Fezziwig dancing.

A Ceremony of Carols was written by Benjamin Britten in 1942. The structure of this composition is reminiscent of the carol service prevalent in Anglican churches on Christmas eve. It is written to Middle English texts by James, John and Robert Wedderburn, Robert Southwell, William Cornish and anonymous authors carefully chosen by Britten for their poetic imagery and the antique flavor of the language. As with all his vocal music, Britten accomplishes his aims by the use of inspired figuration in the accompaniments—this indeed is a basic feature of his style; the pregnant motif sounds deceptively simple to the ear, yet on examination it is invariably seen to be far from obvious and extremely ingenious. Thus in *A Ceremony of Carols*, in which the total effect must appear to be unsophisticated, his method is the repetition of significant figures. The charmingly individual sections of the composition display mediations and paeans on various aspects of the Nativity.

Daniel Pinkham was born in Lynn, Massachusetts, to a prominent family engaged in the manufacture of patent medicines—his great-grandmother was Lydia E. Pinkham. Schooled at Philips Academy and Harvard, he now lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He has held teaching positions at Boston and Harvard Universities, served as harpsichordist for the Boston Symphony Orchestra and currently is the organist at Boston's historic King's Chapel and a member of the faculty of the New England Con-

servatory. "More than the majority of his contemporaries, Pinkham has searched throughout the periods of music history for materials to be used expressively in his compositions. While he often seems to favor the very old and the new, one senses an intense interest in the Baroque era." (Marlow W. Johnson, *American Choral Review*, Vol. VIII No. 4).

Christmas Cantata (subtitled *Sinfonia Sacra*) is in three contrasted movements. The first movement begins with a declamatory *maestoso* built on a pedal G. "Shepherds, what did you see? Speak! Tell us what appeared on earth." The shepherds' reply (the body of the movement) is *allegro molto ritmico* and paints a picture of almost incoherent exultation as they stammer: "Born—we saw Him born..."—each gasp punctuated by roulades on a solo trumpet. Finally, they gather their wits about them and tell the rest of the news: "and a chorus of angels praising the Lord. Alleluia."

The second movement, *adagio*, is also a setting of a Renaissance motet text: "O great mystery, that animals should see the Lord born and lying in a manger." This time the trumpets have a modal *ostinato*, rising and falling over a pedal D. The voices, in long ornamented phrases, establish a mood of impassioned contemplation. The movement ends quietly and expectantly with a D major chord superimposed over a D minor, an ambiguous effect that Pinkham seems to enjoy.

The final movement is an *allegro* on "Glory to God in the highest," in a form earlier used by Praetorius in his *Canticum trium puerorum*: a refrain, with contrasting verses of increasing complexity. At the last refrain the trumpets peal forth in joyous polytonality, always returning, however, to the tonal center of G major.

Christmas Carols Old and New

For the last several weeks, we have all been bombarded with the Muzak version of Christmas carols in countless department stores. Subjected to the constant repetition, we tend to forget that many of these carols, simple though they may be, are music of the highest order. In response to numerous requests, the second half of this evening's program is devoted to a selection of the best and most familiar carols, as well as a few novelties.

Sing We Now of Christmas is a French carol probably from the fifteenth century. It was certainly well known by the sixteenth, since it is mentioned in Rabelais' *Pantagruel*. Salli Terri's setting is sumptuously Oriental, emphasizing the mention of the Wise Men in the text.

Three Carols on Gregorian Themes range from a note for note quotation of the chant theme by Wilbur Chenoweth to the mere use of the first phrase by Max Reger.

Adoro Te devote is a Communion hymn to Christ in the Blessed Sacrament by St. Thomas Aquinas. Wilbur Chenoweth has

based his carol *Do You Know the New-Born Child?* on the same melody to honor Christ as a tiny Babe.

Resonet in laudibus is a joyous song celebrating the birth of Mary's Son. Max Reger uses the opening phrase of the chant transmuted by a rocking rhythm into a lullaby. *The Virgin's Slumber Song*, though otherwise melodically original, derives its mood and impetus from the triadic opening phrase.

Puer natus est nobis, the Introit of the Third Mass of Christmas, is from the earlier and more golden age of Gregorian chant. Dr. Wagner has made the translation of the Latin text for his fantasy on the chant theme.

Three Christmas Spirituals. Mary Had a Baby is an example of the spiritual at its most contemplative. In delightful contrast, *The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy* is bright, fast, and somewhat jazzy. *Jesus, Jesus, Rest Your Head* is a "white" spiritual from the Appalachian Mountain region. It was collected by John Jacob Niles who devoted his career to collecting and preserving folk songs of this region.

Un Mélange de Noels Favoris avec les Jouers de Cloches might be more prosaically referred to as a medley of favorite carols sung by the Chorale with the happy addition of bell ringers (and all other musicians on stage). *Il Est Né* is an old French carol learned by Roger Wagner as a child and later translated and arranged by him. *Now is born the Divine Christ Child. Sing Noel! God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen*, an infectiously cheerful London tune dating back at least to the seventeenth century, was immortalized by Dickens in his *A Christmas Carol*. *Deck the Halls* could well have been sung by the Welsh before the Christian missionaries arrived. In any case, it is a secular carol in honor of the pre-Christian Yuletide festivities. *Good King Wenceslas* is not, strictly speaking, a Christmas carol, but rather the story of an incident in the life of the legendary King of Bohemia. The "Feast of Stephen" occurs on December 26 in honor of the first martyr to the Christian faith. *Anges de Nos Campagnes*. It is said that Telesphorus, Bishop of Rome in 129 A.D., ordained that the "Angel's Song" be solemnly sung on the holy night of the Nativity. Whether *Angels We Have Heard on High* is actually the "Angel's Song" of Telesphorus' time or not, it is undoubtedly one of the first purely Christian hymns.



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TIME MAGAZINE

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Don Bremer
Alfred Chan
James Cox
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Next month brings two gala occasions:

THE BIRTHDAY CONCERT OF THE ROGER WAGNER CHORALE

on

January 16, 7:30 p.m.

in the Pavilion

and the appearance of THE JOHN BIGGS CONSORT, the first of our new Chamber Concert Series in the Mark Taper Forum, on January 3, 8:00 p.m. Don't be disappointed. Get your tickets early.

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